

Approved: Meeting 31-88

Attest: *Margaret R. Glavin*

MAYOR AND COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND
MEETING NO. 31-88

July 18, 1988

The Mayor and Council of Rockville, Maryland convened in General Session in the Council Chamber, Rockville City Hall, Maryland Avenue at Vinson Street, Rockville, Maryland, on Monday, July 18, 1988 at 7:30 p.m.

PRESENT

Mayor Douglas M. Duncan

Councilmember Stephen N. Abrams

Councilmember James F. Coyle

Councilmember Viola Hovsepien

Councilmember Dave Robbins

The Mayor in the Chair.

In attendance: Acting City Manager Rick Kuckkhan, City Attorney Paul Glasgow, and City Clerk Peg Gearin.

In the first order of business before the Public Hearing, Mayor Duncan announced that Public Hearing M-51-88 would not be heard and would be postponed until September 19, 1988. He apologized for any inconvenience.

Re: Resolution to Appoint City Manager

Next, Mayor Duncan announced that at a 4:00 p.m. press conference that afternoon, the Mayor and Council announced that they had appointed a new City Manager. After Councilmember Abrams introduced a resolution designating Bruce F. Romer as City Manager of Rockville, Mayor Duncan read the following statement:

It's a glorious day for Rockville!

The members of the Council and I, along with a committee of citizens, have spent

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the last several months laying the groundwork for the very crucial task of selecting a manager for the City of Rockville.

We were determined from the very beginning that the process leading to a final selection would be thorough and that the person selected for the position would be the best of a list at included a wide range of applicants.

To set the process in motion, we engaged the Interface Group, and I would like to thank them publicly for their performance. They were extremely professional and assisted us in every way possible. After a thorough nationwide search, Interface came up with a list of potential candidates, seven of whom were selected by the Mayor and Council and the citizens committee for consideration. Following personal interviews by the Mayor and Council, three candidates were brought back to Rockville for a follow-up interview. They were then introduced to the members of the citizens committee, who had an opportunity to talk with each candidate. Let me also thank the members of the citizens committee for their time and insight they gave us. They were invaluable to us during the selection.

The result of the interviews was a unanimous decision by the Mayor and Council to offer the position of city manager of Rockville to Bruce Romer and this decision has set in motion what will be a strong and healthy administration in City Hall.

Now, before I tell you more about our new city manager, I want to say a few words about Rick Kuckkahn, who thought when he came to Rockville 15 months ago he was all set for an uninterrupted run as director of our Planning Department. That is, until last November when he was called on to leave the familiar territory of Planning and take on the difficult and risky job of acting as city manager until a permanent manager could be found.

Rick accepted this tremendous responsibility, and for the last few months has done an excellent job of providing the leadership and stability needed to see us

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through an often difficult transition. Thank you very much, Rick.

And now, back to Bruce Romer. When we began the search process, I promised to find a city manager who is in tune with the community and its residents. A city manager who will work with our community - our citizens, our businesses, and the Mayor and Council in a cooperative, constructive spirit. A city manager who will carry the strong support of this Mayor and Council in working with you. And a city manager who will bring to Rockville experience and skill in building community partnerships to solve community problems. We have spoken with many people who know him and asked how Bruce Romer fits this demanding list of expectations, and without hesitation I can say he measures up to the task excellently.

We are delighted to welcome Bruce (and his family) to Rockville. They come to us from Davenport, Iowa, where Bruce served as city administrator for the past five years. He brings to Rockville over 20 years of solid success in the field of city management. Throughout his career he has demonstrated strength in the areas of financial management, downtown redevelopment, and citizen involvement. He bends over backwards to bring people into city government and with tremendous pride, I can say that he is right for Rockville.

Bruce says that among the many challenges he expects to take on, he especially looks forward to becoming involved in planning for Rockville's future. The future looks even better to me today because Bruce Romer and his family will be a part of it.

Statements from the councilmembers were presented:

1. Councilmember James Coyle, Chairperson of the Search Committee congratulated his fellow councilmembers for a good choice and for a good process in which a citizens advisory committee was used as suggested by Mayor Duncan. This citizens committee helped screen the candidates along with Councilmembers Abrams

and Hovsepien who were members of the Search Committee.

Coyle also stated that it was an excellent choice, and that Bruce Romer was a people oriented person, who was open to all constructive input from the community whether from citizens or businesses.

2. Councilmember Steve Abrams joined his colleagues in the comments and characterized Bruce Romer as a "thoroughbred" and a good fit for Rockville saying that Mr. Romer is a City Manager professional who is committed to the Mayor and Council/City Manager form of government and has an excellent reputation for staff development.

He commended the process and believes that although people have asked why it took so long, the process was timely and it gave all the components an opportunity to work. The Mayor and Council made a conscious decision to pick a search firm and they performed admirably. They searched for both traditional and non traditional backgrounds, and the Citizens Advisory Committee spent time and constructive inputs. Everyone will be very pleased when they get to know Bruce Romer as we know him, and I am delighted to see we were unanimous in our decision.

3. Councilmember Viola Hovsepien remarked that all who participated in this selection process, the citizens, the Mayor and Council and the Search Committee Firm, did a good job, and the result - our choice of Bruce Romer will prove that we came to the right conclusion.

Bruce comes to us with very high recommendations through our interviews and interview process in which our representatives went to Davenport, Iowa to check Mr. Romer's credentials. Mr. Romer has a tremendous amount of talent. Just standing at the reception this afternoon where he was meeting the various department heads and hearing how knowledgeable in other fields as well, I think the citizens will be pleased as they get to know Mr. Romer and work with him, and the city staff

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and Mayor and Council will all benefit. I specifically want to emphasize he is the right person for Rockville at this time and I am pleased to have had part of this process. I agree, we made a good choice.

4. Councilmember Dave Robbins added that it was a pleasure to be part of the decision making process that brings Bruce Romer to Rockville and add my enthusiastic support. We have demonstrated that we have a Mayor and Council united and unanimous in our strong support of our new City Manager. Those of us who had the opportunity to briefly visit Davenport have talked to community leaders there and had a first hand view of Arts Facilities, Human Service Programs and programs of development that Bruce was very much involved in while a City Manager in Davenport. We were left with a feeling that he had indeed made a difference in that city in his years as City Manager, and we have a strong feeling he will also make a difference in Rockville. In conclusion, I wish to echo what Mayor Duncan said about our soon to be former Acting City Manager, Rick Kuckkahn who was an outstanding Director of Planning before he started as Acting City Manager and who will go back into that job having done a great service for the City of Rockville. He will go back into that job with an added dimension of government that I feel is good for planners to have. Thank you, Rick and your department heads and the employees of Rockville for carrying on in an outstanding fashion during period of search and transition. We owe you all a great deal.

The Mayor then announced that Mr. Romer would start work on September 6, 1988 and that he had been in Rockville for the weekend and was here for the press conference but is now flying back to Davenport. He had an engagement tomorrow and that is why he is not with us tonight.

Mayor Duncan called or the vote. On the motion of Councilmember Abrams, duly seconded and unanimously passed, Resolution No.17A the full text which can be found

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in Resolution Book No. 9 to designate Bruce F. Romer as City Manager of the City of Rockville was adopted by the Mayor and Council.

Re: Proposed Ordinance to repeal and re-enact with amendments Chapter 10A of the "Laws of Rockville" entitled "Smoking Prohibitions and Restrictions" so as to broaden the coverage of its provisions prohibiting and regulating smoking, and to generally amend said chapter to bring its provisions into general conformity with the provisions of Montgomery County law prohibiting and regulating smoking in public places, as contained in Chapter 24, Section 24-9 of the 1984 Montgomery County Code.

The Mayor and Council conducted a public hearing to propose that Rockville's smoking prohibitions and restrictions be brought into conformity with the provisions of the Montgomery County laws. The Mayor and Council heard all those persons as can be found in the official stenographic transcript. There being no other person wishing to be heard, the Mayor declared the hearing closed, with the record to be left open for one month until 8/17/88 at 5:00 p.m.

Re: Proposed ordinance to amend section 1-102 of Chapter 1 of the "Laws of Rockville" so as to permit Montgomery County legislation prohibiting smoking in certain public places and generally regulating smoking as contained in Section 24-9 of the 1984 Montgomery County Code, to apply within the City of Rockville.

The Mayor and Council conducted a public hearing to propose the "Laws of Rockville" be amended so that the Montgomery County legislation prohibiting smoking in public places and generally regulating smoking apply within the City of

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Re: Citizens Forum

The Mayor opened the meeting to those citizens who wished to address the Mayor and Council.

1. Richard Arkin, Chairman of the Planning Commission welcomed Bruce Romer as the new City Manager noting that he and the Planning Commission looked forward to working with him. He also welcomed Rick Kuckkahn back to the Planning Department.

2. Ruth Hanessian, 301 Holland Avenue, submitted a petition signed by citizens and businesses of Rockville strongly supporting the implementation of the Rockville Pike Plan with their understanding that the plan included:

1. Extending Jefferson Street from Richard Montgomery Drive to Montrose Road to run parallel to Rockville Pike.
2. The creation of cross streets that will relieve Rockville Pike traffic.
3. The creation of more underground parking, pedestrian friendly streets, retail arcades and other public benefits.
4. Some moderate density development which will be carefully balanced with residential development.

Re: New Business

1. On motion of Councilmember Abrams, duly seconded and unanimously passed, the Mayor and Council approved a staff recommendation to abandon a sewer easement granted in the 1950's and not used since early 1960's, located on Parcel A,

Metropolitan subdivision of Rockville, Plat Book 77, Plat 7745. The plat was recorded in 1964. In 1962, the city constructed an alternative sewer pipe line and abandoned the pipe line within the referenced easement. Apparently, no action was ever taken by the City or the landowner to abandon the easement, although the easement does not show on the referenced plat.

2. The staff recommended two options to repair the bike path on Girard Court which is deteriorating because of run off.

- A. Patch the path this year and schedule replacement next year; or
- B. add it on our current pathway repairs and handle it is mid year appropriations.

On motion of Councilmember Coyle, duly seconded and unanimously passed, the Mayor and Council approved the authorization for pathway repairs on Girard Court to be handled in mid-year appropriations.

3. On the motion of Councilmember Abrams, duly seconded and unanimously passed, the Mayor and Council approved the recommendation of the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board to dedicated the Annual Antique Car Show to the memory of Barney Welsh.

4. Councilmember Coyle requested that FYI at the Mayor and Council meeting on July 25th include an explanation about signage in Court House Square including the size of signs that are allowed.

5. The Mayor and Council approved a staff recommendation that a reception be held in the Atrium on October 24th for visitors from Pinneberg.

6. In answer to a question from Mayor Duncan, staff reported that Rockville's miniature golf course at Courthouse Square is opened on Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. and occasionally on Saturday if there is a festival downtown.

Re: Executive Session

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The Mayor announced that the Executive Session scheduled to discuss personnel will not be needed because the issue had been resolved.

Re: Adjournment

There being no further business to come before Mayor and Council, on the motion of Councilmember Hovsepian the meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m. to convene again in General Session on Monday, July 25, 1988 at 7:30 p.m. or at the call of the Mayor.